

By removing at least a portion of the protective coating that was applied at block 46, the likelihood the coating will contribute to drive contamination is reduced. Also, a low energy surface remains on the head and other elements to reduce the accumulation of debris collecting on these elements. In this embodiment, the unremoved portion of the protective coating covering the head element is removed when the disk drive is later reassembled and operated, thereby causing the slider to contact the disk surface and the protective coating to be mechanically worn away. Reassembly occurs at block 58.

Finally, if desired, the reworked and reassembled disk drive may be tested at block 60 to assess whether the reworked disk drive is functioning properly. Provided the drive is functioning properly, the disk drive may be placed into the stream of commerce. Alternately, the disk drive may be re-opened a second time, and the basic rework steps of Fig. 4 repeated, with any further optional steps of Fig. 5 performed as may be necessary.

Of course, it is to be understood that the invention described herein applies to any head element that possesses exposed read/write elements, or other sensitive elements. While the above description and the drawings disclose and illustrate numerous alternative embodiments, one should understand, of course, that the invention is not limited to these embodiments. Those skilled in the art to which the invention pertains may make other modifications and other embodiments employing the principles of this invention, particularly upon considering the foregoing teachings. Therefore, by the appended claims, the applicant intends to cover any modifications and other embodiments as incorporate those features which constitute the essential features of this invention.